

**MINUTES OF RYDE TOWN COUNCIL'S MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY
2 OCTOBER 2023 AT 7.00PM IN THE GEORGE STREET CENTRE, BAPTIST CHURCH, RYDE.**

Members Present: Cllr Richard May (Mayor), Cllr Georgie Carter, Cllr Charles Chapman, Cllr Simon Cooke, Cllr Diana Conyers, Cllr Jo Elliott (Deputy Mayor), Cllr Jess Higgins, Cllr Michael Lilley, and Cllr Malcolm Ross, and Cllr Ian Stephens

Also in Attendance: Jon Baker (Committees and Ryde Place Plan Coordinator), Lisa Dyer (Clerk of Ryde Town Council), PS Matt James (Hants & OW Police), APS Chantal Miller (Hants & IOW Police) and Chris Turvey (Place, Neighbourhood and Planning Officer).

12 Members of the public attended.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- A question was asked around who was responsible for the decisions to make the deck chairs available on Ryde Beach during the summer months amid what appeared to be a waste of tax payers' money. In response Councillors raised that the weather over the school holiday's this year was particularly bad and that this affects sales. Many local businesses had suffered as a result. The provision of deck chairs and water sports equipment was a service to residents and visitors. Any financial information was available to any member of the public on request.
- A question was asked regarding people riding E-Scooters illegally, such as being under age, riding in the wrong direction on a one-way street as well as having two riders on one E-Scooter. The Police officers who were present advised that such incidents were illegal and that anyone spotting someone breaking the law should note the scooters registration number and time of incident and report it to the E-Scooter hire company.
- A member of the public enquired about whether action was being taken regarding the loose masonry above the Nationwide Building society which was a hazard to passing pedestrians. It was noted that the matter would be raised with the Isle of Wight Council.
- A question was asked around the possibility of switching off LED Street Lights between the hours of 11pm and 5am in order to provide a better natural environment for wild life as well as save council tax payers money. The member of the public was advised that this was a matter for the Isle of Wight Council and could be raised at the initial round of budget talks later in the year.

87/23 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Tom Hanley, Cllr Jenna Sabine, and Cllr Ian Stephens.

88/23 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

Cllr Phil Jordan and Cllr Karen Lucioni declared an interest in Minute Reference 98/23, 99/23 and 100/23 as they were members of the Isle of Wight Councils Cabinet.

89/23 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None requested.

90/23 MINUTES TO THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 24 JULY 2023

The minutes to the previous meeting held on 24 July 2023 were reviewed.

After a proposer, seconder, and a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes to the meeting of Full Council held on 24 July 2023 be agreed.

91/23 UPDATE FROM THE RYDE AREA POLICING TEAM

Two officers from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Police (PS Matt James and APS Chantal Miller) provided an update which included the following:

- Satisfaction rating for police service performance in the town - This was 70% which was higher than the national average rated at 50-55%. However, it was acknowledged that the force would always strive to improve further.
- Summer 2023 – Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour incidents had been heavily prioritised with resources focused on incidents at Ryde Esplanade and Appley Park in particular as well as incidents recorded at Pig Leg lane and Pennyfeathers.
- Shoplifting – As nationally, this had become a big problem in Ryde with incidents up by 73%, causing a knock-on effect of rising prices and servicing rising drug abuse habits.
- Isle of Wight '22 Crew' graffiti vandals – A man had been arrested and charged.

Members were advised that despite the public perception and adverse stories, Ryde was no worse off than any other town of its size, but the Police would continue to tackle all crime and look to reduce levels.

Following concerns that one particular well-regarded PCSO was also now serving Binstead and Wootton, members were assured that officer presence in Ryde would not be affected with officers from other parts of the Island providing cover.

Both the Police and Councillors were concerned that the CCTV on Ryde Esplanade required two cameras to be pointing in the right direction and of a static nature in order to capture any incidents more effectively.

Members thanks both officers for their time and the hard work that they do for the community.

92/23 MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The mayor circulated his report ahead of the meeting which included the following:

- Government Levelling Up Fund - £20 million for Ryde - The endowment-style funding over the next ten years would focus on the priorities of the local community with the Town Board and Ryde Town Council playing a crucial part.
- Summer and Looking Forward – Despite the disappointing weather, the summer was still busy with much going on such as IW Pride, Derek Sandy’s Caribbean Day, Ryde Carnival, the Classic Car Show and much more.

The mayors full report can be accessed **HERE**.

93/23 OFFICERS REPORT

Members received the following officer reports:

- Clerks Update Report

The Clerk provided a report which included the following:

- Beach Accessibility Project – Accessibility Matting and “Boardwalk” style pathways had been tested at local consultation events and plans were in place to work with Haylands Farm and other community groups to build the Boardwalks. Visit IOW had pledged £5,000 towards the project and with the £10,000 from Ryde Town Council and The Isle of Wight Council there was some £25,000 to go towards the project.
 - Appley Day – This was well attended. Many responded to the Beach Accessibility scheme and there were offers of help received to build the Boardwalks.
 - Geocache - 20 additional Geocache’s had been hidden in Ryde and Ryde Town Council would be promoting these in the run up to half term. This was a family friendly, free activity enjoyed by millions worldwide.
 - Grant for Artists Trail – The Town Council had been granted £15,800 from the IW Council to development a women led artists ‘walking trail’ around the town. This would promote safer walking routes around the town and the Community Development Officer had been working with local artists.
 - Ashely Gardens Pond – The pond pump had been fitted, and the pond filled. The fish would be returned once the water was suitable.
- Written Report from the Community Development Officer

Members noted a report from the Community Development Officer which included the following:

- Uniform Swap Shop – This was a very successful event and well received by residents. People came in with a full bags and left with larger sizes garments, whilst others came and took uniforms and provided a donation.
- Ryde Community Guide - This had been completed and was being distributed by volunteers. A few comments had been sent back giving thanks for the guide and the useful information contained within it.
- Supermarket Vouchers - £18,000 (plus admin fee) by Connect 4 Communities had been donated to the Town Council for supermarket vouchers to be used at Ryde's Co-op and Iceland stores. Referrals were from various services and groups in Ryde such as Living Well Early Help Service, Social Prescribers and Citizens Advice.
- Community Forum - This had restarted on the third week in September 2023. A speaker from Paragon detailing information on their Domestic Abuse service and the event was well attended by community groups and partners.

Members also noted that there had been a successful partnership between all Ryde Schools in delivering community litter picking and other green projects and they wished to express their thanks.

Appreciation was also extended to the Community Development Officer who oversaw a great example of shaping the towns future and offering opportunities for local residents.

94/23 PLACE, NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

- i. Place, Neighbourhood and Planning Committee meeting held on 11 July 2023.

The approved minutes of the meetings held on 11 July 2023 were noted.

- ii. To Appoint a Member to the Place, Planning and Neighbourhood Committee.

Cllr Charles Chapman was nominated and seconded and after a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT Cllr Charles Chapman be elected as a member of the Place, Neighbourhood and Planning Committee.

95/23 MEMBERS REPORTS

Cllr Cooke advised that he had attended an Isle of Wight Association of Local Councillors (IWALC) meeting to discuss asset transfers. The next meeting would look at finance training. Regarding the Ryde Regeneration Working Group an update on the interchange was provided and benches and planting was discussed. The High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) Project Group met informally to discuss the High Street Pedestrian Zone Traffic Orders.

Cllr Chapman had attended various meetings ahead of Remembrance Day on 11 November 2023 and Remembrance Sunday on 12 November 2023. All members were encouraged to attend both days ceremonies / services and to dress accordingly.

Cllr Lilley advised that the Waterside Pools application for a grant via the Isle of Wight Council had not succeeded. A discussion with The Heights in Sandown on a future strategy would therefore take place. Regarding Appley Tower, members were advised that Natural Enterprise had given the go ahead for work to commence in the Autumn for a Summer 2024 opening.

96/23 MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Various members asked if Ryde Town Council could do more to counteract the towns various bank closures that had happened over the past year or so. It was noted that the possibility of supporting more hubs could be explored as well as opening talks with remaining banks on how the public could be best served.

97/23 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR).

Members noted the conclusion of External Audit 2022-2023.

98/23 MOTION 03/23 - MOU WITH THE ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL

Members discussed the proposal submitted by Cllr Michael Lilley regarding the MOU with the Isle of Wight Council and agreed that the matter was long overdue to be resolved.

After a proposer, seconder, and a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT Ryde Town Council writes to the Isle of Council and asks that it reconfirms its commitment to the Isle of Wight and Ryde Town Council Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as already agreed within the Ryde Place Plan by both parties and requests that the MOU is finalised and signed as soon as possible.

99/23 MOTION 04/23 - RYDEREGENERATION GROUP BE REVIEWED URGENTLY AND ALIGNED WITHIN RYDE'S PLACE PLANWORKING GROUP AND PROPOSED MOU

This item was withdrawn.

100/23 MOTION 05/23 – (REGARDING REASSESSMENT ON THE PAST PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH/EAST RYDE, THE TOWN COUNCIL REINSTATES ITS PAST POSITION AND OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AREA AND INSISTS AND GAINS SUPPORT FROM IW COUNCIL / LPA THAT THERE IS A RYDE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) ATTACHED TO ANY FUTURE ISLAND PLAN.

Members felt that whilst parts one and two of the motion could effectively be considered as one motion, the third part should be treated as a separate one.

The Place, Neighbourhood and Planning officer advised members that Ryde Town Council, via its Place, Neighbourhood and Planning Committee are already in

discussions with the Isle of Wight Council around having the Ryde Position Statement being treated as an SPD. Members agreed that this motion should be deferred until more information was available.

101/23 PARK PARTNERSHIP

Members considered a proposal to work in partnership with the Isle of Wight Council in order to improve some of Ryde's Parks and greening areas. Initially the parks and planting along the Esplanade, including the Rose Gardens, Ashley Gardens, Coronation Gardens, Western Gardens, and the planting around the Ryde Interchange.

There was some discussion around the specific amount of £10,000 to be budgeted for and it was noted that caution should be expressed at this stage with regard to agreeing such an amount. It was therefore suggested that the specific proposed budget spend should be left out until further information was forthcoming.

After a proposer, seconder, and a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT the following be agreed:

- i. Agree that the Clerk or relevant officer has delegated authority to finalise and agree a partnership agreements/leases with IW Council.**
- ii. That the Public Realm and Natural Environment Sub Committee work with RTC/IW Officers to develop a plan for Greening these areas and make recommendations to Place, Planning and regeneration Committee.**

102/23 TO CONSIDER ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE INTERCHANGE PUBLIC TOILET BLOCK AND ASSOCIATED COMMERCIAL UNITS.

Whilst the agenda did state that this item was to be discussed in private session, Members agreed that it could now be debated in public.

Ryde Town Council had been approached by the Isle of Wight Council to consider taking over the operation of the new toilet facilities within the Train Station at the new Ryde Interchange on the Esplanade. The new facilities were anticipated to be ready for opening by 21 October 2023 which coincided with the Islands school's half-term holidays.

Members were advised that the Town Council would open, close, and clean the toilets only. Some costs would be offset by utilising only the unisex facilities at St Johns Road toilets and mothballing the remaining two (Male / Female) facilities there. Any interim period of taking over the facilities at the train station would need to be finalised.

There would be no desire by Ryde Town Council to take on the lease of the building and be responsible for the upkeep and fixings. However, the included storage unit would be of great benefit. Members agreed that the recommendation would allow the Town Council to revisit the proposal at a later Full Council.

After a proposer, seconder, and a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT the following be agreed:

Agree to the IW Council's request in the short term and mitigate costs by reducing capacity at the St Johns facility. Further negotiate with Senior Management at the Isle of Wight Council and South Western Railway to ensure a 'fair long-term deal' for Ryde Town Council and residents.

103/23 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

In view of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed members were advised that it was in the public interest that the public and press be excluded for the following two items, and they were instructed to withdraw – in accordance with Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S1 (2). After a proposer, seconder, and a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT the removal of the public and press to be withdrawn from the meeting (in accordance with Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S1 (2) be agreed

104/23 COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Members discussed the plans for Eastern Gardens for 2024 and beyond. After a proposer, seconder, and a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT the Officer report recommendation be agreed.

105/23 OFFICE ACCOMODATION

Members discussed a proposal for alternative office accommodation for Ryde Town Council. After a proposer, seconder, and a vote via a show of hands, the following was:

RESOLVED:

THAT the recommendations contained within the report be agreed.

106/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL

The next meeting of Full Council would be held on Monday, 27 November 2023 in the upper room at Ryde Baptist Church (George Street Centre), George Street, Ryde.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm

Signed.....

Cllr Richard may
Mayor of Ryde Town Council, 27 November 2023